



AUSTRALIAN HELLENIC COUNCIL (NSW) INC.
Αυστραλιανό Ελληνικό Συμβούλιο NNO
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MEDIA RELEASE

Hellenic National Day Message

Sydney, 28 October: Hellenism all over the world today celebrates the resistance of our ancestors to the forces of fascism and Nazism. Following the dawn invasion by the forces of the fascist dictator Benito Mussolini, and his Albanian quislings, the people of Hellas, in their entirety, said “NO!”

Seventy years ago, the Hellenic people joined the ranks of the Allies. The Australian Hellenic community had already been involved for a year by that time – donating men, money and material to the Australian war effort. According to *The Argus* newspaper (29 October 1940), at a community meeting at The Athenian Club in Sydney, the cry was “ZITO” and toasts were drunk to General Metaxas for his refusal to accept Mussolini’s demands.

Seventy years ago, the Hellenes of Hellas, of Australia, of the entire world, demonstrated once again that they remained true to the spirit of Hellenism: freedom and democracy. This is how the Australian media and British cartoonists referred to the people of Hellas in the final months of 1940.

As we mark the 2500th anniversary of the Battle of Marathon, where the Hellenes resisted the despotism of the Persian Empire, let us, as Australian Hellenes, take a moment to remember a similarly proud moment in Hellenic history. Another moment when Australians and Hellenes stood together in the fight against despotism.

Seventy years later, the Australian Hellenic Council (NSW), the advocacy group of the Australian Hellenic community, honours the courage and the valour of the Australians, Hellenes and Australian Hellenes who served in the name of freedom and pledges to follow their example.